

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2013

The Honorable John McHugh
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Secretary McHugh:

We are writing to you to express our concerns about the Army's plan to relocate the Recruiting and Retention School (RRS) from Fort Jackson, SC, to Fort Knox, KY. Currently, RRS is located at Fort Jackson, SC, and is part of the Soldier Support Institute (SSI). In its current location, RSS enjoys state of the art facilities and utilizes specially equipped classrooms to train Soldiers to become successful Army recruiters. RRS utilizes 39 specially equipped classrooms at Fort Jackson in pursuit of this all-important mission.

It has been a difficult and frustrating process obtaining information from the Army about this proposed move. Only recently has our staff received a briefing on the issue and in that briefing, we learned that the Army began consideration of relocating RRS in 2009. We only began hearing about the potential relocation of RRS in the last 6 months and in that time; we have sent numerous requests for information but little information was forthcoming until our staffs were briefed on September 19. As you well know, Congress has an important oversight function and we are of the opinion that the Army has not been forthcoming with the information necessary for us to perform our oversight duties.

The information that the Army has provided us alleges that it will be beneficial for the recruiting mission if RRS moves to Fort Knox where U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) is headquartered. The Army maintains that such a move will improve an adherence to standards, ensure training equivalency, strengthen program oversight and centralize management of selected recruiting functions. We find this argument to lack merit as no other service, to include the Coast Guard, has its recruiting command and recruiting school based in the same location. Additionally, neither Armed Services Committee has been notified that Army recruiting is experiencing difficulty meeting their stated recruiting goals or attracting Soldiers who wish to perform the recruiting mission for the Army. The Army has consistently met its recruiting goals, which reflects well on the dedication and professionalism of Army recruiters, but does little to lend credibility to the rational set forth by the Army for moving RRS.

The Army also maintains that relocating RRS to Fort Knox will represent significant cost savings to the Army because excess infrastructure at Fort Knox will allow the Army to house and feed Soldiers for significantly less. We certainly understand that there is excess infrastructure at Fort Knox after the closing of 3rd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Infantry Division and the relocation of the Armor School to Fort Benning, GA. However, with the Army reducing end strength across the active and reserve components, we feel that it is highly likely that training bases such as Fort Jackson will see a decrease in trainees in future fiscal years and thus alleviate on base housing concerns for RRS students.

We also note with great concern that the Army is experiencing difficulties with readiness due to

sequestration. General Odierno recently informed the House Armed Services Committee that the Army is in such a readiness crisis that in fiscal year 2014, if sequestration continues, 85% (59 of 69) active and reserve component BCTs will not meet the contingency requirements of the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance. The operations and maintenance (O&M) account that the Army utilizes to maintain readiness would also be used to pay for portions of moving RRS to Fort Knox. We are of the opinion that Army O&M funds should not be wasted on moving RRS when it is already housed in a fully furnished and functioning facility that has performed exceptionally in training Army recruiters.

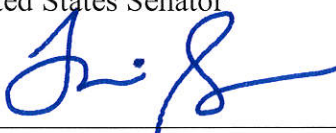
We request that your office conduct an independent cost benefit analysis (CBA) of moving RRS from Fort Jackson to Fort Knox. We believe that the CBA that has already been conducted by USAREC is shortsighted and overly optimistic. We would like to know if it would in fact be more cost effective to use military construction (MILCON) funds to construct on base housing at Fort Jackson for RRS students rather than moving the school. Also, will the reduction in Army end strength gradually alleviate the housing concerns at Fort Jackson as fewer trainees are assigned to the base for training in future fiscal years?

We urge the Army not to proceed with the proposed move of RRS until our concerns are addressed. The arguments in favor of moving RRS are not persuasive. Frankly, it appears as if the Army is trying to fix something that is not broken. We hope you will reevaluate this proposal and order a fresh review. We look forward to working with you and your staff on this important issue.

Sincerely,



LINDSEY O. GRAHAM
United States Senator



TIM SCOTT
United States Senator



TREY GOWDY
Member of Congress



TOM RICE
Member of Congress



JOE WILSON
Member of Congress



JAMES E. CLYBURN
Member of Congress



JEFF DUNCAN
Member of Congress